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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Ambassador Carrington Attends Closing Ceremony of U.S. Consulate-sponsored Youth Fellowship Program in Lagos**

Lagos — Former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, Walter Carrington, attended the closing ceremony of the Carrington Youth Fellowship Initiative (CYFI) on Wednesday in Lagos. CYFI is a youth-based fellowship program launched by the U.S. Consulate General, Lagos, which is now entering its second year.

The CYFI Closing Ceremony was held at the U.S. Consul General's residence on Ikoyi Crescent, Lagos. Ambassador Carrington, along with U.S. Consul General Jeffrey Hawkins, celebrated the conclusion of the CYFI program's inaugural year.

CYFI is a year-long program in which outstanding young Nigerians are selected as fellows and grouped into teams to design and implement a project with a social impact. The U.S. Consulate General, Lagos provides selected fellows with financial support for their projects, networking opportunities, and a transportation stipend. In addition, fellows meet other like-minded youth and build a closer relationship with the Consulate. In its inaugural year, 15 CYFI fellows were selected and grouped into five project teams, with projects focusing on education, vocational training, human rights awareness, health, and university volunteerism. The Closing Ceremony celebrated the achievements of these fellows.

CYFI has just concluded its application and selection process for its second year. The CYFI Board of Directors, in conjunction with the Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Consulate General, Lagos, selected 15 fellows who demonstrated exceptional vision, skills and experience in diverse fields.

Former Ambassador to Nigeria, Walter Carrington, was a champion of civil liberties, democracy and closer ties between the U.S. and Nigeria during his time as ambassador from 1993 to 1997. CYFI is committed to putting the ideals of Walter Carrington into practice.

Ambassador Carrington, who also served as U.S. Ambassador to Senegal from 1980 to 1981, has a long and distinguished career in Africa, which started when he was an

Overseas Director for the Peace Corps in Sierra Leone, Tunisia and Senegal. After leaving the Peace Corps, Carrington became Executive Vice President of the African American Institute and publisher of its magazine, *Africa Report*. He was a member of President Jimmy Carter's election observation team in Zambia and has observed elections and lectured on democratic transition in Angola, Congo Brazzaville and Sierra Leone, among other countries. He also served in academia and worked with several prominent think tanks on issues relating to human rights and democracy in Africa, and African American perspectives. He also oversaw programs which provided scholarships to hundreds of Nigerians for study in the United States.

Among his other numerous honors and achievements, Ambassador Carrington was selected by the Boston Globe Sunday Magazine in 1994 as one of the 100 most distinguished living graduates of Massachusetts' public and parochial schools. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Council of American Ambassadors and the Association of Black American Ambassadors.

Ambassador Carrington is currently an Associate of the W.E.B. DuBois Institute of Harvard University while working on two books, one on Nigeria and another on Islam in Africa. A collection of the Ambassador's speeches, called *A Duty to Speak: Refusing to Remain Silent in a Time of Tyranny* was published in Nigeria in 2010.

Ambassador Carrington's wife, Arese, who also attended the event, is a medical doctor and an international public health specialist.

**For more information:**

The CYFI blog: [www.cyfinigeria.org](http://www.cyfinigeria.org)

CYFI program overview: <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov/cyfi.html>

The Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Consulate General, Lagos is also available to answer queries on CYFI and on Ambassador Carrington's visit.

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